

1 ***Common variants contribute to intrinsic functional architecture of human brain***

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3 **Running title: GWAS of intrinsic brain function**

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1 **Abstract**

2 Human brain has a complex functional architecture and remains active during resting
3 conditions. Resting-state functional magnetic resonance imaging (rsfMRI) measures
4 brain activity at rest, which is closely linked with cognition and clinical outcomes. The
5 role of genetics in human brain function is largely unknown. Here we utilized rsfMRI of
6 44,190 multi-ethnic individuals (37,339 in the UK Biobank) to discover the common
7 genetic variants influencing intrinsic brain activity. We identified and validated hundreds
8 of novel genetic loci associated with intrinsic functional signatures ($P < 2.8 \times 10^{-11}$),
9 especially for interactions of the central executive, default mode, and salience networks
10 involved in the triple network model of psychopathology. A number of intrinsic brain
11 activity associated loci had been implicated with brain disorders (e.g., Alzheimer's
12 disease, Parkinson's disease, schizophrenia) and cognition, such as 17q21.31, 19q13.32,
13 and 2p16.1. Genetic correlation analysis suggested the shared genetic influences among
14 intrinsic brain function, brain structure, and brain structural connectivity. We also
15 detected significant genetic correlations with 26 other complex traits, such as
16 education, cognitive performance, ADHD, major depressive disorder, schizophrenia,
17 sleep, and neuroticism. Heritability of intrinsic brain activity was enriched in brain
18 tissues. The reported risk genes of Alzheimer's disease typically had stronger
19 associations with intrinsic brain activity than brain structure, and the associated genes
20 of intrinsic brain activity were enriched in multiple biological pathways related to
21 nervous system and neuropathology ($P < 1.8 \times 10^{-9}$).

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23 **Keywords:** Amplitude; Functional Connectivity; Intrinsic brain activity; GWAS;
24 Resting-state fMRI; Triple network model; UK Biobank.

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1 Human brain is a complex system exhibiting a wide variety of neural activity and
2 connectivity patterns across brain regions^{1,2}. Functional organization and
3 communication of brain networks are fundamental to bodily behavior and cognitive
4 architectures³⁻⁶. Human brain remains active at rest, resulting in an intrinsic functional
5 architecture. Utilizing changes in blood oxygen level-dependent (BOLD) signal^{2,7},
6 resting-state functional magnetic resonance imaging⁸ (rsfMRI) can capture spontaneous
7 intrinsic brain activity, or neuronal activity not attributable to a given task or stimulus⁹.
8 Specifically, the spontaneous neuronal activity within each functional region can be
9 quantified by the amplitude of low frequency fluctuations (ALFF) in BOLD time
10 series^{2,10,11}. Moreover, a functional connectivity matrix quantifying pairwise
11 inter-regional correlations in spontaneous neuronal variability measures the magnitude
12 of temporal synchrony between each pair of brain regions^{2,12}.

13
14 Several techniques have been developed to characterize functional brain regions and
15 their interactions, such as seed-based analysis with prior knowledges^{2,13}, data-driven
16 independent component analysis^{14,15} (ICA), and graph methods¹⁶. The intrinsic brain
17 activity patterns revealed in rsfMRI illuminate functional architecture of human brain⁹.
18 For example, rsfMRI yields many insights into the resting-state networks (RSNs) of a
19 healthy brain, such as default mode, central executive (i.e., frontoparietal), attention,
20 limbic, salience, somatomotor, and visual networks¹⁷⁻¹⁹. These RSNs are strongly linked
21 functional sub-networks^{18,20} that commonly emerge in rsfMRI studies, which are of
22 great interest in studies of cognition²¹. In addition, rsfMRI and RSNs have a wide range
23 of clinical applications to detect brain abnormality in neurological and psychiatric
24 disorders¹³, such as Alzheimer's disease²², Parkinson's disease²³, and major depressive
25 disorder (MDD)²⁴. Among these RSNs, the central executive, default mode, and salience
26 networks are three core neurocognitive networks that support efficient cognition²⁵⁻²⁷.
27 Accumulating evidence suggests that the functional organization and dynamic
28 interaction of these three networks underlie a wide range of mental disorders, resulting
29 in the triple network model of psychopathology^{26,28}.

30
31 Twin and family studies have largely reported a low to moderate degree of genetic
32 contributions for intrinsic brain activity²⁹⁻³⁵. For example, the family-based heritability

1 estimates of major RSNs ranged from 20% to 40% in the Human Connectome Project
2 (HCP)³⁶. In a previous study using about 8,000 UK Biobank (UKB) individuals³⁷, the SNP
3 heritability³⁸ of amplitude and functional connectivity traits can be more than 30%.
4 Although there were multiple candidate gene studies for intrinsic brain activity (such as
5 for *APOE*³⁹ and *KIBRA*⁴⁰), currently only one genome-wide association study (GWAS)³⁷
6 has been successfully performed on rsfMRI²⁹ ($n \approx 8000$). This is mainly due to the fact
7 that most rsfMRI datasets do not have enough participants for GWAS discovery and the
8 overall genetic effects on neuronal activity are weaker compared to those on brain
9 structure^{37,41-45}. In addition, imaging batch effects⁴⁶ (e.g., image processing procedures,
10 software) may cause substantial extra variability in rsfMRI analyses⁴⁷, making GWAS
11 meta-analysis and independent replication particularly challenging. Therefore, genetic
12 variants influencing intrinsic brain activity remain largely undiscovered and their shared
13 genetic influences with other complex traits and clinical outcomes are unknown.

14

15 To address these challenges, here we collected individual-level rsfMRI data from four
16 independent studies: the UK Biobank⁴⁸, Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development
17 (ABCD⁴⁹), Philadelphia Neurodevelopmental Cohort (PNC⁵⁰), and HCP⁵¹. We harmonized
18 rsfMRI processing procedures by following the unified UKB brain imaging pipeline^{10,52}.
19 Functional brain regions and corresponding functional connectivity were characterized
20 via spatial ICA^{53,54} for 44,190 multi-ethnic individuals, including 37,339 from UK Biobank.
21 As in previous studies^{10,37,55}, two parcellations with different dimensionalities^{18,56} (25
22 and 100 regions, respectively) were separately applied in spatial ICA and we focused on
23 the 76 (21 and 55, respectively) regions that had been confirmed to be
24 non-artefactual¹⁰. Two group of neuroimaging phenotypes were then generated: the
25 first group contains 76 (node) amplitude traits reflecting the regional spontaneous
26 neuronal activity; and the second group includes 1,695 (i.e., $21 \times 20/2 + 55 \times 54/2$)
27 (edge) functional connectivity traits that quantify the inter-regional co-activity, as well
28 as 6 global functional connectivity measures summarizing all of the 1,695 pairwise
29 functional connectivity traits³⁷. These 1,777 traits were then used to explore the genetic
30 architecture of intrinsic brain activity. To aid interpretation of GWAS results, the
31 functional brain regions characterized in ICA were labelled by using the automated
32 anatomical labeling atlas⁵⁷ and were mapped onto major RSNs defined in Yeo, et al. ¹⁹

1 and Finn, et al.¹⁷. Our GWAS results can be easily explored and downloaded through the
2 Brain Imaging Genetics Knowledge Portal (BIG-KP) <https://bigkp.web.unc.edu/>.

3

4 RESULTS

5 Genetics of the intrinsic brain functional architecture.

6 SNP heritability was estimated for the 1,777 intrinsic brain activity traits via GCTA⁵⁸. The
7 mean heritability (h^2) estimate was 27.2% (range = (10%, 36.5%), standard error = 6.0%)
8 for the 76 amplitude traits, all of which remained significant after adjusting for multiple
9 comparisons by using the Benjamini-Hochberg procedure to control false discovery rate
10 (FDR) at 0.05 level (1,777 tests, **Fig. 1a, Supplementary Table 1**). Among the 1,701
11 functional connectivity traits, 1,230 had significant (again at 5% FDR) heritability with
12 estimates varying from 3% to 61% (mean = 9.6%, standard error = 5.8%). Ten functional
13 connectivity traits had heritability larger than 30%, including 6 pairwise functional
14 connectivity traits and 4 global functional connectivity measures. These traits were most
15 related to central executive, default mode, and salience networks in the triple network
16 model of psychopathology²⁶, indicating that the level of genetic control might be higher
17 in these core neurocognitive networks (**Fig. 1b, Supplementary Fig. 1**). The range of
18 heritability estimates was consistent with previous results³⁷, suggesting that common
19 genetic variants had a low to moderate degree of contributions to inter-individual
20 variability of intrinsic brain activity. The overall genetic effects on both amplitude and
21 functional connectivity were lower than those on brain structure. For example, the
22 average heritability was reported to be 48.7% for diffusion tensor imaging (DTI) traits of
23 brain structural connectivity in white matter tracts⁵⁹ and 40% for regional brain volumes
24 measuring brain morphometry⁴³. However, as shown below, intrinsic brain activity may
25 have stronger genetic connections with some brain disorders than brain structure, such
26 as the Alzheimer's disease.

27

28 Genome-wide association discovery was carried out for 1,777 intrinsic brain activity
29 traits using UKB individuals of British ancestry ($n = 34,691$, Methods). The Manhattan
30 and QQ plots can be found in the BIG-KP server. At the significance level 2.8×10^{-11} (i.e.,
31 $5 \times 10^{-8}/1,777$, adjusted for the 1,777 traits), we identified 328 independent significant
32 variants (linkage disequilibrium [LD] $r^2 < 0.2$, Methods) involved in 987 variant-trait

1 associations for 197 traits (75 amplitude and 122 functional connectivity,
2 **Supplementary Table 2**). The amplitude traits typically had multiple associated variants
3 (**Supplementary Table 3**) and a number of variants were widely related to the amplitude
4 in different brain regions, such as rs11187837 in the 10q23.33 genomic region,
5 rs9899649 in 17p11.2, rs10781575 in 10q26.3, and rs429358 in 19q13.32. For functional
6 connectivity, rs2279829 in 3q24, rs2863957 in 2q14.1, rs7650184 in 3p11.1, and
7 rs34522 in 5q14.3 were associated with multiple functional connectivity traits. Pairwise
8 functional connectivity traits that had multiple significant variants were again most
9 related to central executive, default mode, and salience networks (**Fig. 2a**). Of the 14
10 associated variants that had been identified in the previous GWAS³⁷, 12 were in LD ($r^2 \geq$
11 0.6) with our significant variants, most of which were associated with amplitude traits.
12 With a more strict LD threshold (LD $r^2 < 0.1$), FUMA⁶⁰ selected 227 lead variants out of
13 the 328 significant variants, and then characterized 604 significant locus-trait
14 associations (Methods, **Fig. 2b, Supplementary Tables 4-5**). In summary, our analyses
15 identify many novel variants associated with intrinsic functional signatures and illustrate
16 the global genetic influences on functional connectivity across the whole brain. The
17 degree of genetic control is higher in central executive, default mode, and salience
18 networks, whose cross-network interactions closely control multiple cognitive functions
19 and affect major brain disorders²⁸.

20

21 **Validation and the effect of ethnicity.**

22 We aimed to validate our results in UKB British GWAS using other independent datasets.
23 First, we repeated GWAS on UKB individuals of White but Non-British ancestry (UKBW, n
24 = 1,970). We found that 97.3% significant associations ($P < 2.8 \times 10^{-11}$) in UKB British
25 GWAS had the same effect signs in the UKBW GWAS, and 82.5% had smaller P -values
26 after meta-analyzing the two GWAS. These results suggest similar effect sizes and
27 directions of the top variants among the European subjects within the UKB study^{61,62}.
28 Next, we performed GWAS in three non-UKB European cohorts: ABCD European
29 (ABCDE, $n = 3,821$), HCP ($n = 495$), and PNC ($n = 510$). We meta-analyzed UKBW with the
30 three non-UKB GWAS and checked whether the locus-trait associations detected in UKB
31 British GWAS can be validated in the meta-analyzed validation GWAS ($n = 6,796$). For
32 the 604 significant associations, 115 (19%) passed the 8.2×10^{-5} (i.e., 0.05/604)

1 Bonferroni significance level in this validation GWAS, and 599 (99.2%) were significant at
2 FDR 5% level (**Supplementary Table 6**). Moreover, we performed a third meta-analysis
3 to combine all of the five European GWAS, after which 75.5% significant associations in
4 UKB British GWAS had smaller *P*-values. Overall, our results suggest that the associated
5 genetic loci discovered in UKB British GWAS have high generalizability in independent
6 European rsfMRI studies, despite the fact that these studies may use different imaging
7 protocols/MRI scanners and recruit participants from different age groups. The good
8 homogeneity of GWAS results may partially benefit from the consistent rsfMRI
9 processing procedures that we applied to these datasets.

10

11 We further examined replication using polygenic risk scores⁶³ (PRS) derived from UKB
12 British GWAS (Methods). For the 197 traits that had significant variants, 168 had
13 significant PRS in at least one of the four European validation GWAS datasets at FDR 5%
14 level (197 × 4 tests, **Supplementary Table 7**), illustrating the significant out-of-sample
15 prediction power of our discovery GWAS results. The largest incremental R-squared
16 were observed on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 6th global functional connectivity measures in
17 UKBW and HCP datasets, which were larger than 5% (range = (5.1%, 5.7%), *P* range =
18 (1.1 × 10⁻²⁴, 4 × 10⁻¹³)). To evaluate the influences of ethnicity, PRS was also constructed
19 on four non-European validation datasets: the UKB Asian (UKBA, *n* = 446), UKB Black
20 (UKBBL, *n* = 232), ABCD Hispanic (ABCDH, *n* = 768), and ABCD African American (ABCD A,
21 *n* = 1,257). UKBA had the best validation performance among the four datasets, with 86
22 PRS being significant at FDR 5% level (197 × 4 tests, **Supplementary Table 7**). The
23 number of significant PRS was reduced to 59, 39, and 31 in ABCDH, ABCDA, and UKBBL,
24 respectively. In summary, these PRS results illustrate the overall consistency of genetic
25 effects in European cohorts and also show the potential negative effects of ethnicity in
26 cross-population applications, especially for Black/African-American cohorts. More
27 efforts are required to identify further loci associated with functional brain in global
28 diverse populations.

29

30 **The shared genetic loci with brain-related complex traits and disorders.**

31 To evaluate the shared genetic influences between intrinsic brain activity and other
32 complex traits, we carried out association lookups for the 328 significant variants (and

1 their LD tags, i.e., variants with LD $r^2 \geq 0.6$) detected in UKB British GWAS (Methods).
2 On the NHGRI-EBI GWAS catalog⁶⁴, our results tagged many variants reported for a wide
3 range of complex traits in different trait domains, such as cognitive performance,
4 neurological and psychiatric disorders, education, bone mineral density, sleep,
5 smoking/drinking, brain structure, and anthropometric traits (**Supplementary Table 8**).
6 Below we highlighted colocalizations in a few selected genomic regions.

7

8 The 17q21.31 region was associated with functional connectivity of temporal and frontal
9 regions mostly involved in central executive, default mode, and salience networks (**Fig.**
10 **3a**). This genomic region has been reported by Parkinson's disease studies⁶⁵⁻⁶⁹. As a
11 system-level progressive neurodegenerative disorder⁷⁰, Parkinson's disease not only led
12 to motor abnormalities, but also had non-motor symptoms such as temporal perception
13 abnormalities⁷¹ and impaired connectivity among frontal regions⁷². Cognitive
14 dysfunction and disrupted coupling between default mode and salience networks were
15 commonly reported in Parkinson's disease²⁷. In addition to Parkinson's disease, the
16 17q21.31 region was widely related to other complex traits, including neurological
17 disorders (e.g., Alzheimer's disease⁷³, corticobasal degeneration⁷⁴, progressive
18 supranuclear palsy⁷⁵), psychiatric disorders (e.g., autism spectrum disorder⁷⁶, depressive
19 symptoms⁷⁷), educational attainment^{78,79}, psychological traits (e.g., neuroticism⁷⁷),
20 cognitive traits (cognitive ability⁸⁰), sleep⁸¹, heel bone mineral density⁸², alcohol use
21 disorder⁸³, subcortical brain volumes⁴⁴, and white matter microstructure⁵⁹.

22

23 Next, the 19q13.32 region had genetic effects on the amplitude of many functional brain
24 regions that were most in default mode, central executive (i.e., frontoparietal),
25 attention, and visual networks (**Fig. 3b**). It is well known that 19q13.32 is a risk locus of
26 Alzheimer's disease, containing genes such as *APOE*, *APOC*, and *TOMM40*. In this region,
27 we tagged variants associated with dementia and decline in mental ability, including
28 Alzheimer's disease⁸⁴⁻⁸⁸, frontotemporal dementia⁸⁹, cerebral amyloid angiopathy⁹⁰,
29 cognitive decline⁹¹⁻⁹³, cognitive impairment test score⁹⁴, as well as many biomarkers of
30 Alzheimer's disease, such as neurofibrillary tangles⁹⁰, neuritic plaque⁹⁰, cerebral amyloid
31 deposition⁹⁵, cerebrospinal fluid protein levels⁹⁴, and cortical amyloid beta load⁸⁸.
32 Altered amplitude activity has been widely reported in patients of cognitive impairment

1 and Alzheimer's disease^{96,97}. The brain degeneration related to Alzheimer's disease may
2 begin in the frontoparietal regions⁹⁸ and was associated with dysfunction of multiple
3 RSNs, especially the default mode network²². Our findings suggest the shared genetic
4 influences between intrinsic neuronal activity and brain atrophy of Alzheimer's disease.

5
6 In addition, the 2p16.1 and 5q15 regions were mainly associated with interactions
7 among central executive, default mode, and salience networks (**Fig. 3c, Fig. 3d, and**
8 **Supplementary Fig. 2**). We observed colocalizations with psychiatric disorders (e.g.,
9 schizophrenia⁹⁹, MDD¹⁰⁰, depressive symptoms¹⁰¹, autism spectrum disorder¹⁰²),
10 psychological traits (e.g., neuroticism⁷⁷, well-being spectrum¹⁰³), sleep¹⁰⁴, cognitive traits
11 (e.g., intelligence¹⁰⁵), and hippocampus subfield volumes¹⁰⁶. Dysregulated triple network
12 interactions were frequently reported in patients of schizophrenia¹⁰⁷, depression¹⁰⁸, and
13 autism spectrum disorder¹⁰⁹. Similarly, the 2q24.2 and 10q26.13 regions had genetic
14 effects on functional connectivity traits involved in central executive, default mode,
15 salience, and attention networks (**Supplementary Figs. 3-4**). In these two regions, our
16 identified variants tagged those that have been implicated with schizophrenia¹¹⁰,
17 educational attainment⁷⁸, cognitive traits (e.g., cognitive ability⁸⁰), smoking/drinking
18 (e.g., smoking status^{79,111}, alcohol consumption¹¹¹), hippocampus subfield volumes¹⁰⁶,
19 and heel bone mineral density⁸². We also observed colocalizations in many other
20 genomic regions, such as in 2q14.1 region with sleep traits (e.g., sleep duration^{81,112},
21 insomnia¹⁰⁴), in 3p11.1 with cognitive traits (e.g., cognitive ability¹¹³, intelligence¹¹⁴,
22 math ability⁷⁸), in 2p21 with heel bone mineral density^{79,115}, and in 6p25.3 with
23 stroke^{116,117}. In summary, instinct brain function has wide genetic links to a large
24 number of brain-related complex traits and clinical outcomes, especially the
25 neurological and psychiatric disorders and cognitive traits.

26

27 **Genetic correlations with brain structure and cognition.**

28 To explore whether genetically mediated brain structural changes were associated with
29 brain function, we examined pairwise genetic correlations (gc) between 82 intrinsic
30 brain activity traits (i.e., the 76 amplitude traits and the 6 global functional connectivity
31 measures) and 315 traits of brain structure via LDSC¹¹⁸ (Methods), including 100
32 regional brain volumes⁴³ and 215 DTI traits of brain structural connectivity in white

1 matter tracts¹¹⁹. There were 137 significant pairs between 44 intrinsic brain functional
2 traits and 87 brain structural traits at FDR 5% level (82×315 tests, $|gc|$ range = (0.18,
3 0.44), P range = (4.3×10^{-12} , 2.6×10^{-4}), **Supplementary Table 9**).

4
5 We found significant genetic correlations between global functional connectivity
6 measures and regional volumes in cerebral cortex, including prefrontal (caudal middle
7 frontal, pars orbitalis, pars triangularis) and precentral of frontal lobe; superolateral
8 (inferior parietal, supramarginal) and postcentral of parietal lobe; superolateral
9 (transverse temporal, middle temporal, superior temporal) of temporal lobe; and insula
10 ($|gc|$ range = (0.2, 0.42), $P < 1.4 \times 10^{-4}$, **Fig. 4a**). These global functional connectivity
11 measures mainly represented the central executive, default mode, salience, and
12 attention networks, suggesting the widely shared genetic influences between cerebral
13 cortex volumes and cognition. Amplitude traits also had significant genetic correlations
14 with brain volumes, most of which were negative. For example, 16 amplitude traits
15 across multiple RSNs had significant genetic correlations with total brain volume ($|gc|$
16 range = (0.2, 0.41), $P < 2 \times 10^{-4}$). It is well known that brain size/volume is phenotypically
17 associated with intrinsic amplitude¹²⁰. Moreover, the amplitude of putamen and
18 caudate regions in subcortical-cerebellum network¹⁷ was genetically correlated with
19 ventricular volumes ($|gc|$ range = (0.26, 0.36), $P < 5.9 \times 10^{-5}$). Ventricular volumes are
20 known to be related to subcortical volumes^{121,122}. For the amplitude of precuneus region
21 in default mode and central executive networks, we observed significant genetic
22 correlations with cuneus, lingual, and pericalcarine volumes in occipital lobe ($|gc|$ range
23 = (0.2, 0.37), $P < 1 \times 10^{-4}$). In addition, the amplitude of occipital regions (calcarine,
24 lingual, and cuneus) in visual network had significant genetic correlations with
25 pericalcarine volume ($|gc|$ range = (0.3, 0.44), $P < 5.1 \times 10^{-5}$). Cerebral cortex is deeply
26 involved in a wide variety of brain function^{19,123}. Our results uncover the genetic links
27 between intrinsic brain function and the associated structural substrates.

28
29 Significant genetic correlations were also observed between intrinsic brain activity and
30 brain structural connectivity (**Fig. 4b**). We highlighted the amplitude of frontal regions
31 (precentral, middle/inferior frontal) in central executive network, which had significant
32 genetic correlations with global integrity of white matter and tract-specific integrity in

1 body of corpus callosum (BCC), cingulum cingulate gyrus (CGC), external capsule (EC),
2 long anterior limb of internal capsule (ALIC), posterior limb of internal capsule (RLIC),
3 and superior longitudinal fasciculus (SLF) tracts ($|gc|$ range = (0.2, 0.29), $P < 2.5 \times 10^{-4}$).
4 Another example is the amplitude of occipital and temporal regions (middle occipital,
5 inferior/middle temporal) in visual and attention networks, which was genetically
6 correlated with the structural connectivity in BCC, fornix (FX), superior corona radiata
7 (SCR), posterior corona radiata (PCR), posterior limb of internal capsule (PLIC), RLIC, and
8 SLF tracts ($|gc|$ range = (0.22, 0.37), $P < 2.4 \times 10^{-4}$). In addition, global functional
9 connectivity measures were genetically correlated with BCC, genu of corpus callosum
10 (GCC), splenium of corpus callosum (SCC), EC, posterior thalamic radiation (PTR), SLF,
11 uncinate fasciculus (UNC), corticospinal tract (CST), and sagittal stratum (SS) tracts ($|gc|$
12 range = (0.18, 0.41), $P < 2.2 \times 10^{-4}$). Structural connectivity and functional connectivity
13 have a complex but close relationship^{20,124}, and our analyses provide new insights into
14 their genetic overlaps. To our knowledge, these results are the first to indicate that
15 genetic changes in brain structure may also impact intrinsic brain function and result in
16 brain functional differences.

17

18 Next, we examined the genetic correlations between 1,777 intrinsic brain activity traits
19 and 30 other complex traits, mainly focusing on cognition and brain disorders
20 (**Supplementary Table 10**). We found 176 significant pairs between 26 complex traits
21 and 102 intrinsic brain activity traits at FDR 5% level ($30 \times 1,777$ tests, P range = ($8.6 \times$
22 10^{-12} , 2.3×10^{-3}), **Supplementary Table 11**). For amplitude traits, we detected significant
23 genetic correlations with cognitive traits studied in previous GWAS, including cognitive
24 performance, general cognitive function, intelligence, and numerical reasoning ($|gc|$
25 range = (0.15, 0.21), $P < 1.8 \times 10^{-4}$, **Fig. 5**). We also observed significant genetic
26 correlations with cross disorder (five major psychiatric disorders¹²⁵) ($|gc|$ range = (0.32,
27 0.33), $P < 9.7 \times 10^{-5}$) and sleep ($|gc|$ range = (0.15, 0.18), $P < 1.6 \times 10^{-4}$). The association
28 between intrinsic amplitude and cognition²¹, sleep¹²⁶, and brain disorders¹²⁷ had been
29 previously reported. Furthermore, many significant genetic correlations were uncovered
30 between intrinsic functional connectivity and brain-related traits, such as education,
31 cognitive traits, cross disorder, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD),
32 schizophrenia, MDD, neuroticism, sleep, risk tolerance, and subjective well-being. For

1 example, ADHD was genetically correlated with functional connectivity in attention,
2 somatomotor, and subcortical-cerebellum networks ($|gc| = 0.31$, $P = 1.2 \times 10^{-4}$), and
3 MDD had significant genetic correlations with default mode, central executive, and
4 salience networks ($|gc|$ range = (0.26, 0.27), $P < 1.2 \times 10^{-4}$) (**Supplementary Fig. 5**). In
5 addition, many functional connectivity traits across major RSNs had genetic correlations
6 with education ($|gc|$ range = (0.14, 0.35), $P < 1.8 \times 10^{-4}$), cognitive performance ($|gc|$
7 range = (0.15, 0.35), $P < 1.3 \times 10^{-4}$), cross disorder ($|gc|$ range = (0.26, 0.37), $P < 8.7 \times$
8 10^{-5}), and schizophrenia ($|gc|$ range = (0.18, 0.3), $P < 1.2 \times 10^{-4}$), matching previously
9 reported phenotypical associations^{55,107,109} (**Supplementary Figs. 6-8**). We also found
10 broad genetic correlations with manual occupation¹²⁸ ($|gc|$ range = (0.15, 0.24), $P < 1.5$
11 $\times 10^{-4}$), BMI¹²⁹ ($|gc|$ range = (0.2, 0.37), $P < 1.5 \times 10^{-4}$), and behavioral factors
12 (drinking¹³⁰ and smoking¹³¹), all of which had been linked to brain functional differences.
13

14 **Gene-level association analysis and biological annotations.**

15 Gene-level association was tested via MAGMA¹³² (Methods), which detected 970
16 significant gene-trait associations ($P < 1.5 \times 10^{-9}$, adjusted for 1,777 phenotypes) for 123
17 genes (**Supplementary Fig. 9, Supplementary Table 12**). In addition, we applied FUMA⁶⁰
18 to map significant variants ($P < 2.8 \times 10^{-11}$) to genes via physical position, expression
19 quantitative trait loci (eQTL) association, and 3D chromatin (Hi-C) interaction, which
20 yielded 273 more associated genes that were not discovered in MAGMA (352 in total,
21 **Supplementary Table 13**). For the 396 genes associated with intrinsic brain activity in
22 either MAGMA or FUMA, 89 had been linked to white matter microstructure¹¹⁹, 52 were
23 reported to be associated with regional brain volumes⁴³, and 43 were related to both of
24 them (**Supplementary Table 14**). These triple overlapped genes were also widely
25 associated with other complex traits, such as Parkinson's disease, neuroticism, alopecia,
26 handedness, reaction time, and intelligence (**Supplementary Table 15**), providing more
27 insights into the genetic overlaps among brain structure, brain function, and other
28 brain-related traits. For example, *MAPT*, *NSF*, *WNT3*, *CRHR1*, *PLEKHM1*, *STH*, *LRR37A3*,
29 *ARHGAP27*, *KANSL1*, and *SPPL2C* were risk genes of Parkinson's disease, which were also
30 associated with pallidum grey matter volume⁴³, fractional anisotropy and mean
31 diffusivity of white matter microstructure¹¹⁹, and intrinsic functional connectivity in
32 central executive, default mode, and salience networks. These complementary

1 neuroimaging traits had all been used to study the pathophysiology of Parkinson's
2 disease¹³³⁻¹³⁵. In addition, 5 of our intrinsic brain activity associated genes (*CALR*, *CALY*,
3 *SLC47A1*, *CYP2C8*, *CYP2C9*) were targets for 12 nervous system drugs¹³⁶, such as 5
4 psycholeptics (ATC code: N05) to produce calming effects, 2 anti-depressants (N06A) to
5 treat MDD and related conditions, 2 anti-migraine (N02C), and one anti-dementia
6 (N06D) (**Supplementary Table 16**).

7

8 It is of particular interest to study the functional connectivity dysfunction in Alzheimer's
9 disease and identify the overlapped genes^{22,137}. Our gene-level analysis replicated *APOE*
10 and *SORL1*, which were frequently targeted in Alzheimer's disease-candidate gene
11 studies of functional connectivity^{29,138}. More importantly, we uncovered more
12 overlapped genes between intrinsic brain activity and Alzheimer's disease, such as
13 *PVRL2*, *TOMM40*, *APOC1*, *MAPK7*, *CLPTM1*, *HESX1*, *BCAR3*, *ANO3*, and *YAP1*
14 (**Supplementary Table 17**). These genes had much stronger associations with intrinsic
15 brain activity than brain structure. We also found many pleiotropic genes associated
16 with serum metabolite, low density lipoprotein cholesterol, high density lipoprotein
17 cholesterol, triglyceride, type II diabetes mellitus, and blood protein measurements, all
18 of which might be related to the Alzheimer's disease^{139,140}. These results largely expand
19 the overview of the shared genetic components among metabolic dysfunction, blood
20 biomarkers, brain function, and Alzheimer's disease, suggesting the potential value of
21 integrating these traits in future Alzheimer's disease research.

22

23 To identify the tissues and cell types in which genetic variation yields differences in
24 functional connectivity, we performed partitioned heritability analyses¹⁴¹ for tissue type
25 and cell type specific regulatory elements¹⁴² (Methods). We focused on the 10
26 functional connectivity traits that had heritability larger than 30%. At FDR 5% level, the
27 most significant enrichments of heritability were observed in active gene regulation
28 regions of fetal brain tissues, neurospheres, and neuron/neuronal progenitor cultured
29 cells (**Supplementary Fig. 10, Supplementary Table 18**). We also tried to further identify
30 brain cell type specific enrichments using chromatin accessibility data of two main gross
31 brain cell types¹⁴³ (i.e., neurons (NeuN+) and glia (NeuN-)) and multiple neuronal and
32 glial cell subtypes, including oligodendrocyte (NeuN-/Sox10+), microglia, and astrocyte

1 (NeuN-/Sox10-), as well as GABAergic (NeuN+/Sox6+) and glutamatergic neurons
2 (NeuN+/Sox6-). No significant enrichment was detected for these brain cell types after
3 adjusting for multiple testing. Next, we performed MAGMA tissue-specific gene
4 property¹³² analysis for 13 GTEx¹⁴⁴ (v8) brain tissues (Methods). We found that genes
5 with higher expression levels in human brain tissues generally had stronger associations
6 with intrinsic brain activity, particularly for tissues sampled from cerebellar hemisphere
7 and cerebellum regions ($P < 1.9 \times 10^{-5}$, **Supplementary Fig. 11, Supplementary Table**
8 **19**).

9

10 MAGMA¹³² gene-set analysis was performed to prioritize the enriched biological
11 pathways (Methods). We found 59 significantly enriched gene sets after Bonferroni
12 adjustment ($P < 1.8 \times 10^{-9}$, **Supplementary Table 20**). Multiple pathways related to
13 nervous system were detected, such as “go neurogenesis” (GO: 0022008), “go neuron
14 differentiation” (GO: 0030182), “go regulation of nervous system development” (GO:
15 0051960), “go regulation of neuron differentiation” (GO: 0045664), “go cell
16 morphogenesis involved in neuron differentiation” (GO: 0048667), and “go neuron
17 development” (GO: 0048666). Other frequently prioritized gene sets included “dacosta
18 uv response via ercc3 dn” (M4500), “go dna binding transcription factor activity”
19 (GO:0003700), “go sequence specific dna binding” (GO:0043565), “dacosta uv response
20 via ercc3 common dn” (M13522), “go negative regulation of rna biosynthetic process”
21 (GO:1902679), “go negative regulation of biosynthetic process” (GO:0009890), and “go
22 regulatory region nucleic acid binding” (GO: 0001067). M4500 and M13522 are
23 *ERCC3*-associated gene sets related to xeroderma pigmentosum (XP) and
24 trichothiodystrophy (TTD) syndromes^{145,146}. The *ERCC3* gene was highly relevant to the
25 progression of Alzheimer's disease¹⁴⁷. Patients affected with XP or TTD may have
26 primary neuronal degeneration and reduced myelination¹⁴⁶, which were closely related
27 to abnormal functional connectivity¹⁴⁸ and intellectual impairment¹⁴⁹.

28

29 **DISCUSSION**

30 In the present study, we evaluated the influences of common variants on intrinsic brain
31 functional architecture using uniformly processed rsfMRI data of 44,190 subjects from
32 four independent studies. Genome-wide association analysis found hundreds of novel

1 loci related to intrinsic brain activity in the UKB British cohort, which were successfully
2 replicated in independent datasets. The interactions across core neurocognitive
3 networks (central executive, default mode, and salience) in the triple network model
4 had genetic links with cognition and multiple brain disorders. The shared genetic
5 factors among functional, structural, and diffusion neuroimaging traits were also
6 uncovered. Gene-level analysis detected many overlapped genes between intrinsic brain
7 activity and Alzheimer's disease. The enriched tissues and biological pathways were also
8 prioritized in bioinformatic analyses. Compared to the previous study³⁷ with about 8,000
9 subjects, this large-scale GWAS much improved our understanding of the genetic
10 architecture of functional human brain.

11

12 Our study faces a few limitations. First, the samples in our discovery GWAS were mainly
13 from European ancestry. In our PRS analysis, we illustrated the negative effects of
14 ethnicity when applying the European GWAS results on validation cohorts with
15 non-European ancestry. The multi-ethnic genetic architecture of intrinsic brain activity
16 needs to be further investigated when more rsfMRI data from global populations
17 become available. Second, our study focused on the brain functional activity at rest.
18 Recent study³⁴ had found that combining rsfMRI and task functional magnetic
19 resonance imaging (tfMRI) may result in higher heritability estimates and potentially
20 boost the GWAS power. Thus, future studies could model rsfMRI and tfMRI together to
21 uncover more insights into the genetic influences on brain function. In addition, we
22 applied ICA in this study, which was a popular data-driven approach to characterize the
23 functionally connected brain². It is also of great interest to evaluate the performance of
24 other popular rsfMRI approaches (such as seed-based analysis and graph theory) in
25 these large-scale datasets. Finally, although we found the genetic links between brain
26 function and other complex traits, the shared biological mechanisms and causal genetic
27 relationships among these traits remain largely unclear. More efforts are required to
28 enhance our knowledge of human brain using the accumulating publicly available
29 imaging genetics data resources.

30

31 **URLs.**

32 Brain Imaging GWAS Summary Statistics, <https://github.com/BIG-S2/GWAS>;

- 1 Brain Imaging Genetics Knowledge Portal, <https://bigkp.web.unc.edu/>;
- 2 UKB Imaging Pipeline, https://git.fmrib.ox.ac.uk/falmagro/UK_biobank_pipeline_v_1;
- 3 PLINK, <https://www.cog-genomics.org/plink2/>;
- 4 GCTA & fastGWA, <http://cnsngenomics.com/software/gcta/>;
- 5 METAL, <https://genome.sph.umich.edu/wiki/METAL>;
- 6 FUMA, <http://fuma.ctglab.nl/>;
- 7 MGAMA, <https://ctg.cncr.nl/software/magma>;
- 8 LDSC, <https://github.com/bulik/ldsc/>;
- 9 FINDOR, <https://github.com/gkichaev/FINDOR>;
- 10 NHGRI-EBI GWAS Catalog, <https://www.ebi.ac.uk/gwas/home>;
- 11 The atlas of GWAS Summary Statistics, <http://atlas.ctglab.nl/>.

12

13 **METHODS**

14 Methods are available in the **Methods** section.

15 *Note: One supplementary information pdf file and one supplementary table zip file are*
16 *available.*

17

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16

17 **AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS**

18 B.Z., H.Z., J.L.S., W.L., and Y.L. designed the study. B.Z., T.F.L., D.X., X.W., Y.Y., and T.Y.L.
19 analyzed the data. T.F. L., Z.Z., and Y.S. downloaded the datasets, processed rsfMRI data,
20 and undertook quantity controls. P.R., M.E.H., J.B., and J.F.F. analyzed brain cell
21 chromatin accessibility data. B.Z. and H.Z. wrote the manuscript with feedback from all
22 authors.

23

24 **CORRESPONDENCE AND REQUESTS FOR MATERIALS** should be addressed to H.Z.

25

26 **COMPETING FINANCIAL INTERESTS**

27 The authors declare no competing financial interests.

28

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16

17 **METHODS**

18 **Imaging phenotypes and datasets.** The rsfMRI datasets were consistently processed
19 following the procedures in UK Biobank imaging pipeline¹⁰. Details about image
20 acquisition, preprocessing, and phenotype generation in each dataset can be found in
21 **Supplementary Note**. Following the previous study³⁷, we generated two groups of
22 phenotypes, including 76 node amplitude traits reflecting the spontaneous neuronal
23 activity, 1,695 pairwise functional connectivity traits quantifying co-activity for node
24 pairs, and 6 global functional connectivity measures to summarize all pairwise functional
25 connectivity (**Supplementary Table 21**). For each continuous phenotype or covariate
26 variable, values greater than five times the median absolute deviation from the median
27 value were removed. We analyzed the following datasets separately: 1) the UKB
28 discovery GWAS, which used data of individuals of British ancestry¹⁵⁰ in the UKB study (n
29 = 34,691); 2) four European validation GWAS: UKB White but Non-British (UKBW, n =
30 1,970), ABCD European (ABCDE, n = 3,821), HCP (n = 495), and PNC (n = 510); 3) two
31 non-European UKB validation GWAS: UKB Asian (UKBA, n = 446) and UKB Black (UKBBL,
32 n = 232); and 4) two non-European non-UKB validation GWAS, including ABCD Hispanic

1 (ABCDH, $n = 768$) and ABCD African American (ABCD A, $n = 1,257$). See **Supplementary**
2 **Table 22** for a summary of these datasets and demographic information. The
3 assignment of ancestry in UKB was based on self-reported ethnicity (Data-Field 21000),
4 which was verified in Bycroft, et al. ¹⁵⁰. The ancestry in ABCD was assigned by
5 combining the self-reported ethnicity and ancestry inference results as in Zhao, et al. ¹¹⁹.
6 The functional brain regions characterized in ICA were labelled using the automated
7 anatomical labeling atlas⁵⁷ (**Supplementary Table 23**) and were mapped onto major
8 RSNs defined in Yeo, et al. ¹⁹ and Finn, et al. ¹⁷ (**Supplementary Figs. 12-13,**
9 **Supplementary Tables 24-26**). Details of mapping procedures can be found in
10 **Supplementary Note**.

11

12 **GWAS discovery and validation.** Details of genotyping and quality controls can be found
13 in **Supplementary Note**. SNP heritability was estimated by GCTA⁵⁸ using all autosomal
14 SNPs in the UKB British cohort. We adjusted the effects of age (at imaging),
15 age-squared, sex, age-sex interaction, age-squared-sex interaction, imaging site, and the
16 top 40 genetic principle components (PCs). Genome-wide association analysis was
17 performed in linear mixed effect model using fastGWA¹⁵¹, while adjusting the same set
18 of covariates as in GCTA. GWAS were also separately performed via Plink¹⁵² in European
19 validation datasets UKBW, ABCDE, HCP, and PNC, where the effects of age, age-squared,
20 sex, imaging sites (if applicable), age-sex interaction, age-squared-sex interaction, and
21 top ten genetic PCs were adjusted.

22

23 To validate results in the UKB British discovery GWAS, meta-analysis was performed
24 using the sample-size weighted approach via METAL¹⁵³. We checked whether the
25 locus-level associations detected in the British GWAS can be validated in the
26 meta-analyzed GWAS. We also performed meta-analysis for the UKB British discovery
27 GWAS and the meta-analyzed validation GWAS to check whether the P -values became
28 smaller after combining these results. Polygenic risk scores (PRS) were constructed on
29 eight validation datasets using Plink. The BLUP effect sizes estimated from GCTA-GREML
30 analysis in UKB British discovery GWAS were used as weights in PRS construction, which
31 accounted for the LD structures. Ambiguous variants (i.e. variants with complementary
32 alleles) were removed from analysis. We tried 17 P -value thresholds for variant

1 selection according to their marginal P -values from fastGWA: 1, 0.8, 0.5, 0.4, 0.3, 0.2,
2 0.1, 0.08, 0.05, 0.02, 0.01, 1×10^{-3} , 1×10^{-4} , 1×10^{-5} , 1×10^{-6} , 1×10^{-7} , and 1×10^{-8} . The
3 best prediction accuracy achieved by a single threshold was reported for each
4 phenotype, which was measured by the additional phenotypic variation that can be
5 explained by the polygenic profile (i.e., the incremental R-squared), adjusting for the
6 effects of age, gender, and top ten genetic PCs.

7

8 **The shared loci and genetic correlation.** The genomic loci associated with intrinsic brain
9 activity traits were defined using FUMA (version 1.3.5e). We input UKB British discovery
10 summary statistics after reweighting the P -values using functional information via
11 FINDOR⁷⁹. After LD-based clumping, FUMA identified independent significant variants,
12 which were defined as variants with a P -value smaller than the predefined threshold
13 and were independent of other significant variants (LD $r^2 < 0.2$). FUMA then constructed
14 LD blocks for these independent significant variants by tagging all variants in LD ($r^2 \geq$
15 0.6) with at least one independent significant variant and had a MAF ≥ 0.0005 . These
16 variants included those from the 1000 Genomes reference panel that may not have
17 been included in the GWAS. Moreover, within these significant variants, independent
18 lead variants were identified as those that were independent from each other (LD $r^2 <$
19 0.1). If LD blocks of independent significant variants were close (<250 kb based on the
20 closest boundary variants of LD blocks), they were merged into a single genomic locus.
21 Thus, each genomic locus could contain multiple significant variants and lead variants.
22 Independent significant variants and all the variants in LD with them ($r^2 \geq 0.6$) were
23 searched by FUMA on the NHGRI-EBI GWAS catalog (version 2019-09-24) to look for
24 previously reported associations ($P < 9 \times 10^{-6}$) with any traits. LDSC¹¹⁸ software (version
25 1.0.1) was used to estimate and test the pairwise genetic correlation. We used the
26 pre-calculated LD scores provided by LDSC, which were computed using 1000 Genomes
27 European data. We used HapMap3¹⁵⁴ variants and removed all variants in the major
28 histocompatibility complex (MHC) region. The summary statistics of intrinsic brain
29 activity traits were from the UKB British discovery GWAS and the resources of other
30 summary statistics were provided in **Supplementary Table 10**.

31

1 **Gene-level analysis and biological annotation.** Gene-based association analysis was
2 performed in UKB British participants for 18,796 protein-coding genes using MAGMA¹³²
3 (version 1.07). Default MAGMA settings were used with zero window size around each
4 gene. We then carried out FUMA functional annotation and mapping analysis, in which
5 variants were annotated with their biological functionality and then were linked to
6 35,808 candidate genes by a combination of positional, eQTL, and 3D chromatin
7 interaction mappings. Brain-related tissues/cells were selected in all options and default
8 values were used for all other parameters in FUMA. For the detected genes in MAGMA
9 and FUMA, we performed lookups in the NHGRI-EBI GWAS catalog (version 2020-02-08)
10 to explore their previously reported gene-trait associations. We performed heritability
11 enrichment analysis via partitioned LDSC¹⁴¹. Baseline models were adjusted when
12 estimating and testing the enrichment scores for our tissue type and cell type specific
13 annotations. Methods to analysis chromatin data of glial and neuronal cell subtypes can
14 be found in Zhao, et al. ¹¹⁹. We also performed gene property analysis for the 13 GTEx¹⁴⁴
15 v8 brain tissues via MAGMA. Specifically, we examined whether the tissue-specific gene
16 expression levels can be linked to the strength of the gene-trait association. MAGMA
17 was also used to explore the enriched biological pathways, in which we tested 500
18 curated gene sets and 9,996 Gene Ontology (GO) terms from the Molecular Signatures
19 Database¹⁵⁵ (MSigDB, version 7.0).

21 **Code availability**

22 We made use of publicly available software and tools listed in URLs. Other codes used in
23 our analyses are available upon reasonable request.

25 **Data availability**

26 Our GWAS summary statistics can be downloaded at <https://github.com/BIG-S2/GWAS>.
27 The individual-level data used in the present study can be obtained from four publicly
28 accessible data resources: UK Biobank (<http://www.ukbiobank.ac.uk/resources/>), ABCD
29 (<https://abcdstudy.org/>), HCP (<https://www.humanconnectome.org/>), and PNC
30 (<https://www.med.upenn.edu/bbl/philadelphianeurodevelopmentalcohort.html>). Our
31 results can also be easily browsed through our knowledge portal
32 <https://bigkp.web.unc.edu/>.

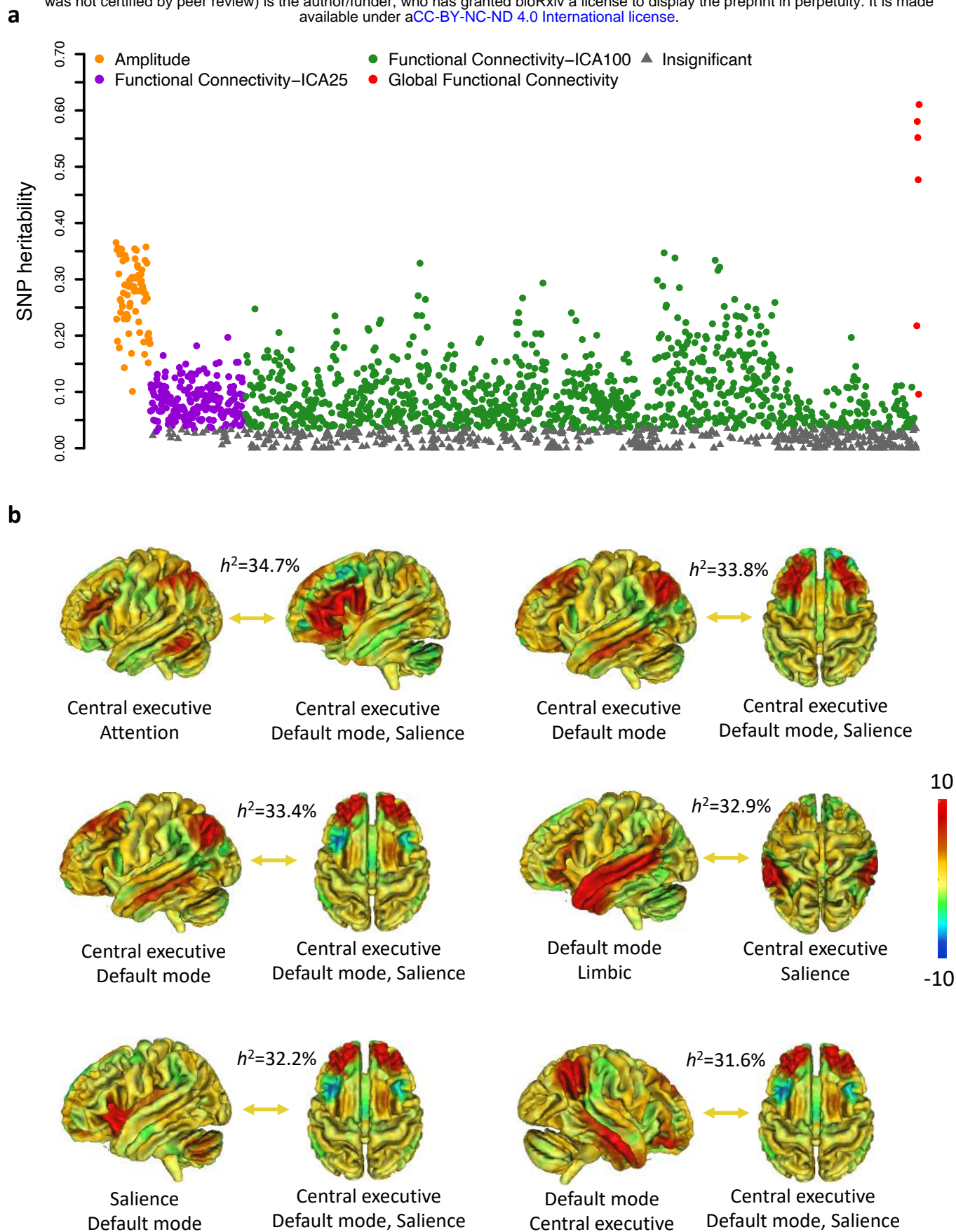
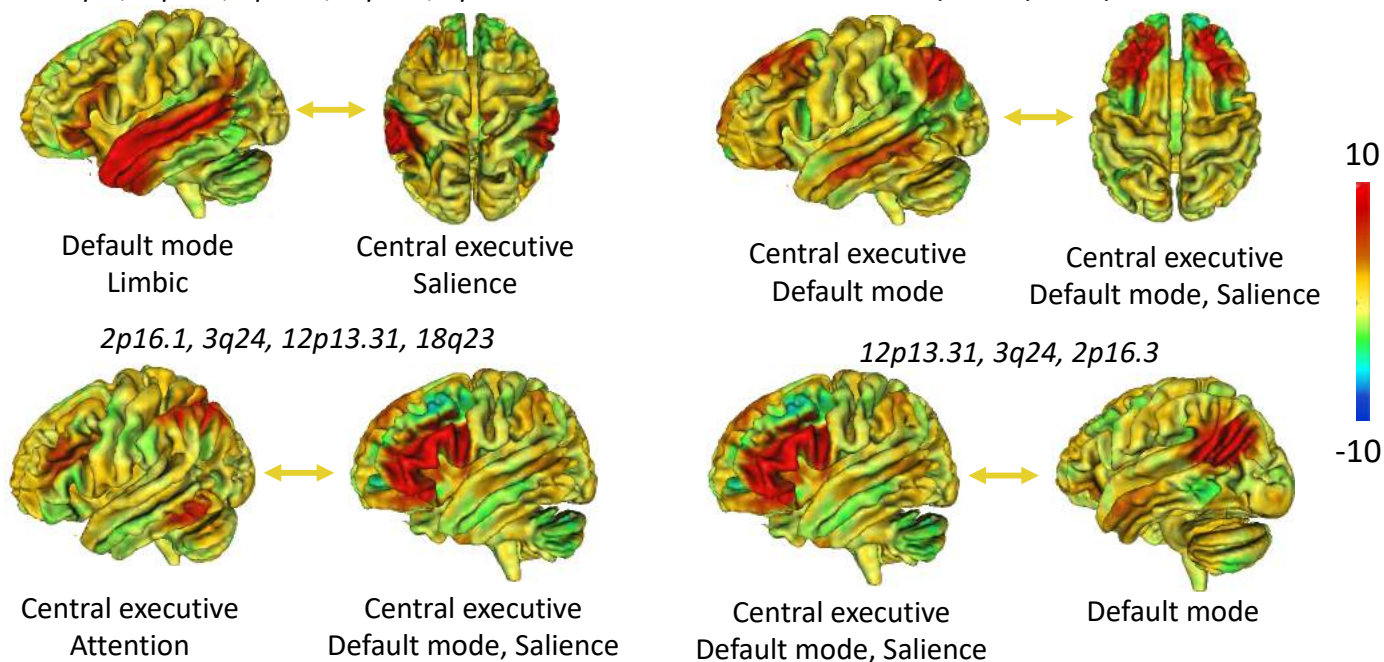


Figure 1: SNP heritability estimates of intrinsic brain activity (n = 34,691 subjects). **a)** The SNP heritability estimates of 1,777 intrinsic brain activity traits, including 76 amplitude traits, 1,695 pairwise functional connectivity traits, and 6 global functional connectivity measures. Two parcellations with different dimensionalities (25 and 100, respectively) were applied. **b)** The 6 pairwise functional connectivity traits that had heritability larger than 30%.

a



b

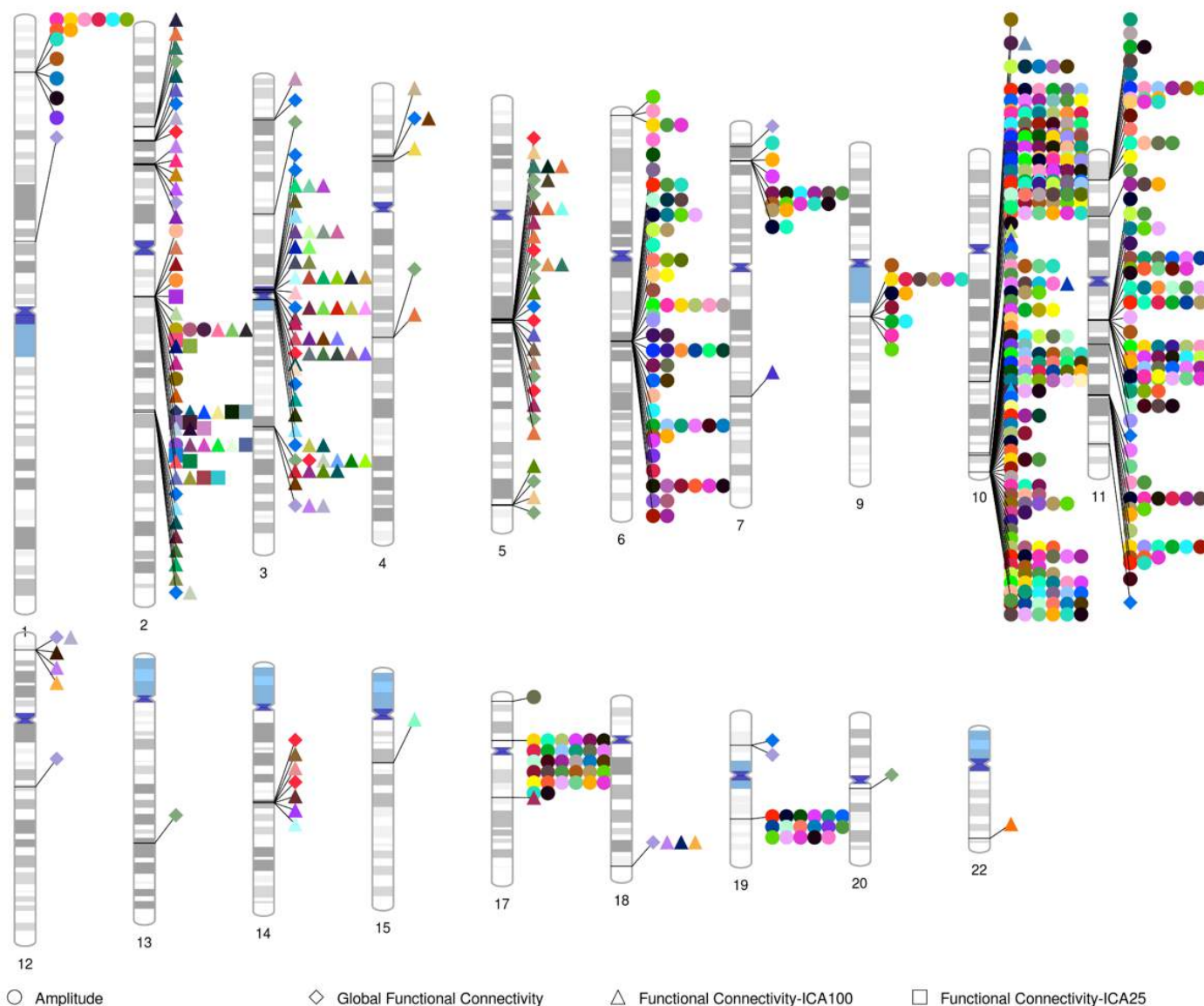


Figure 2: The associated genetic loci of intrinsic brain activity (n = 34,691 subjects). **a)** Selected pairwise functional connectivity traits that had multiple associated genetic loci. **b)** Ideogram of all loci influencing intrinsic brain activity.

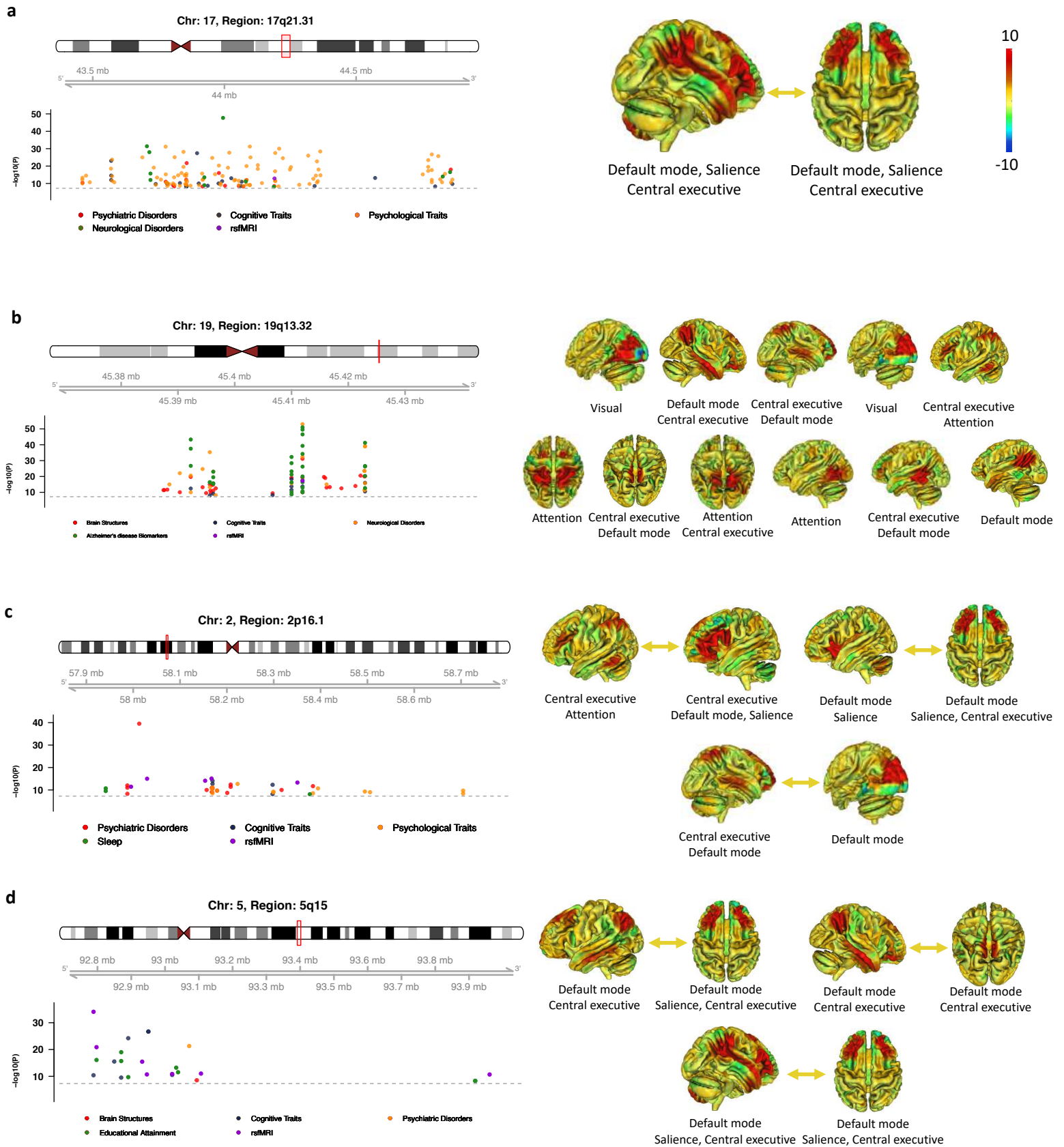


Figure 3: The selected shared loci associated with both intrinsic brain activity and other brain-related complex traits and disorders. We illustrate local colocalizations (left, $LD\ r^2 \geq 0.6$) between intrinsic brain activity traits (right) associated variants ($n = 34,691$ subjects) and previously reported associations of other traits on the NHGRI-EBI GWAS catalog (<https://www.ebi.ac.uk/gwas/>).

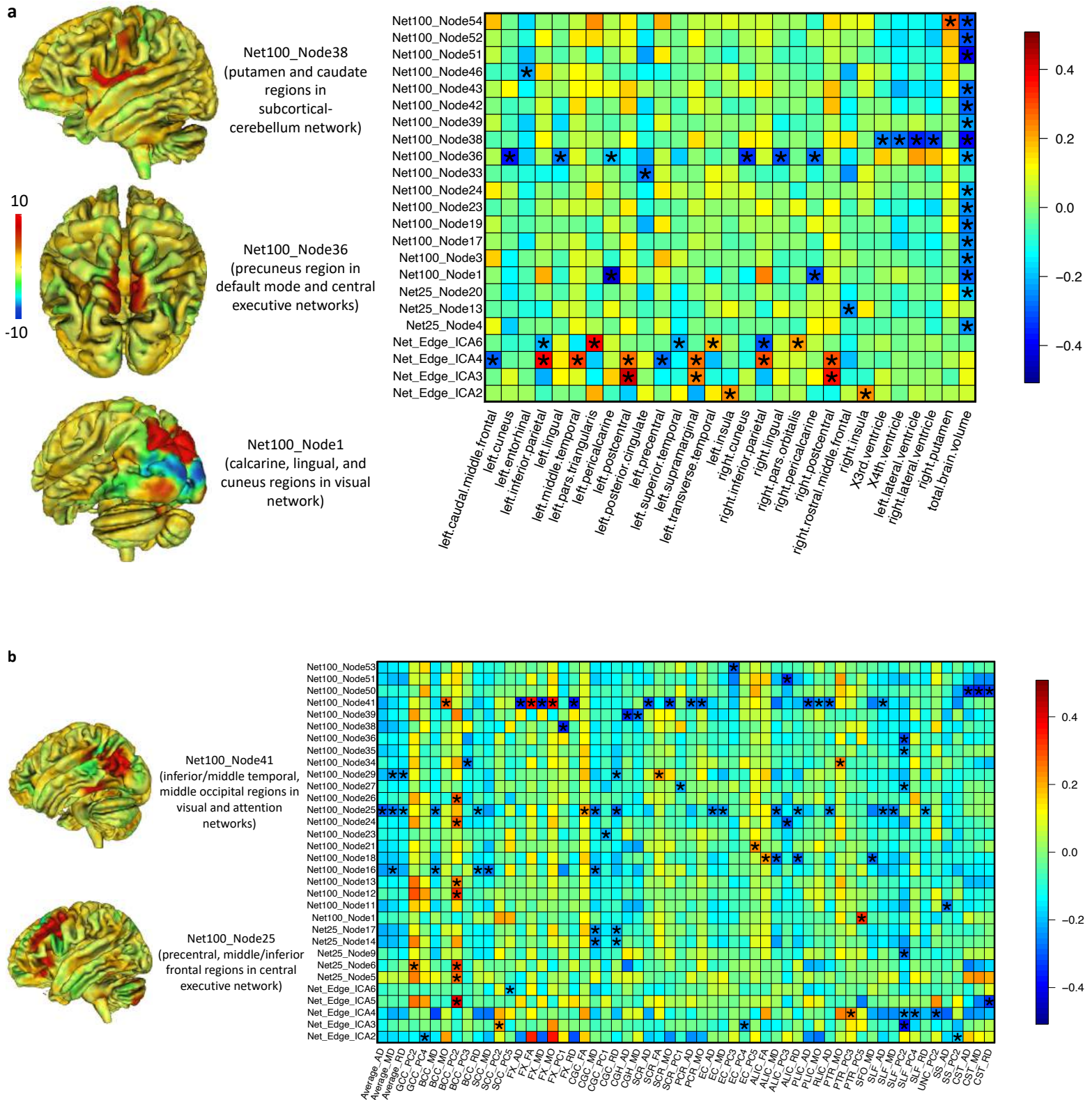


Figure 4: Pairwise genetic correlations between intrinsic brain activity and brain structure (n = 34,691 subjects). a) Genetic correlations between intrinsic brain activity traits and regional brain volumes. **b)** Genetic correlations between intrinsic brain activity traits and DTI traits of white matter microstructure. The x axis lists names of brain structural traits and y axis lists names of brain intrinsic brain activity traits. We adjusted for multiple testing by the Benjamini-Hochberg procedure at 0.05 significance level (82 × 315 tests), while significant pairs are labeled with stars.

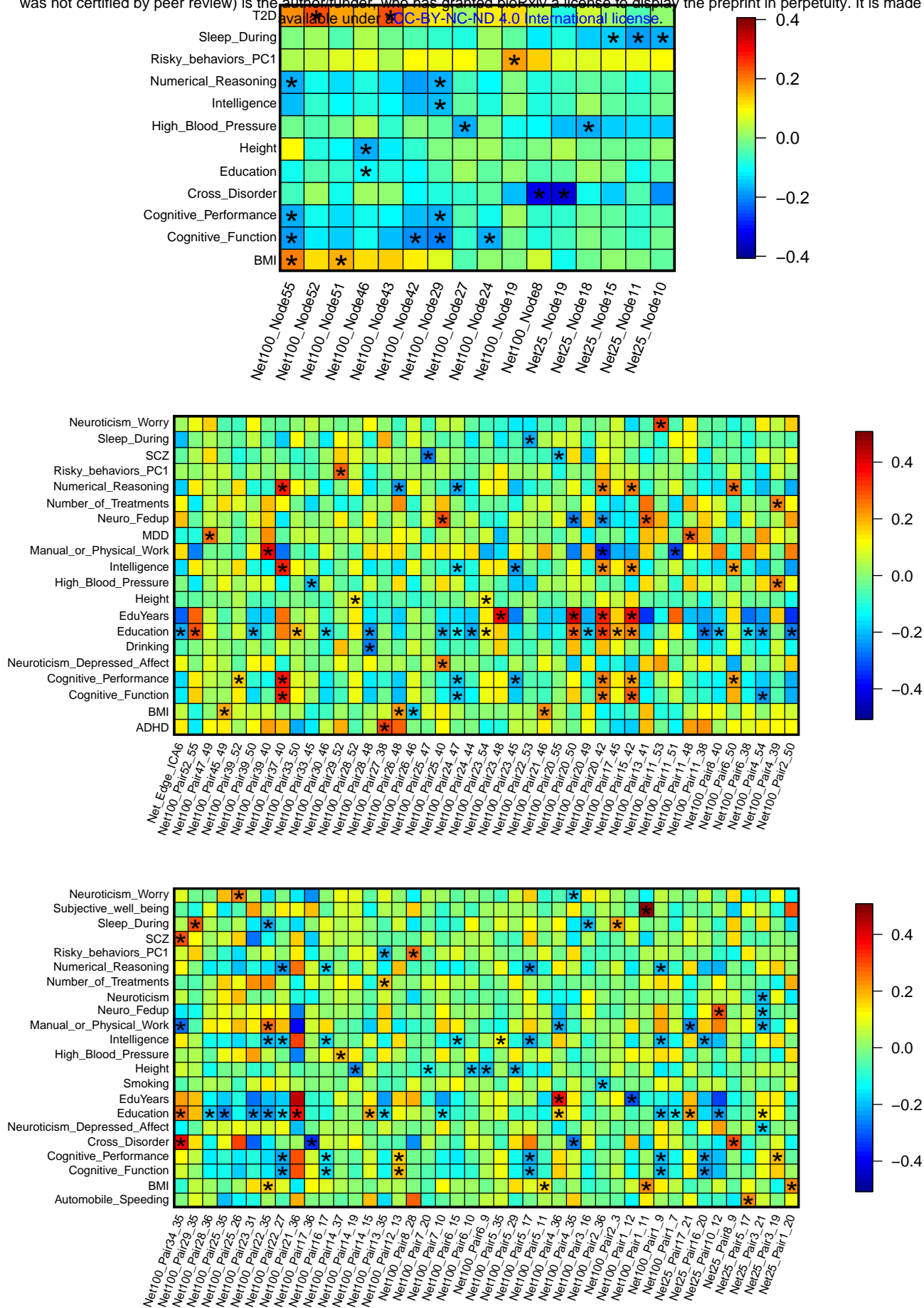


Figure 5: Pairwise genetic correlations between intrinsic brain activity and other complex traits (n = 34,691 subjects). We adjusted for multiple testing by the Benjamini-Hochberg procedure at 0.05 significance level ($1,777 \times 30$ tests), while significant pairs are labeled with stars. The y axis lists names of brain structural traits and x axis lists names of other complex traits.